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ALL POSTS FOR PAO, USSOCOM FOR POLAD

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SUBJECT: WHA GUIDANCE, AUGUST 23-24, 2004

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON  
DATE/CASE ID: 25 OCT 2005 200304736

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## Summary of Contents:

1. WHA Press Guidance, Aug 23 (Venezuela)
2. WHA Press Guidance, Aug 24 (Cuba)

End Summary.

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1. WHA PRESS GUIDANCE, AUGUST 23, 2004:
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-- VENEZUELA: FINAL COMMENT ON REFERENDUM RESULTS --

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. REACTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS, ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THEIR PARTIAL AUDIT CONFIRMED PRESIDENT CHAVEZ, VICTORY IN THE REFERENDUM?

A: THE RESULTS OF THE OAS AND CARTER CENTER AUDIT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE RESULTS ANNOUNCED BY THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COUNCIL ON AUGUST 16. WE UNDERSTAND THE ELECTORAL COUNCIL WILL CERTIFY THE FINAL RESULTS ON AUGUST 25.

WE URGE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, LED BY THE OAS AND THE FRIENDS OF THE OAS SECRETARY GENERAL FOR VENEZUELA AND THE CARTER CENTER, TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC EFFORTS.

Q: DOES THIS MEAN THE U.S. NOW ACCEPTS CHAVEZ, VICTORY IN THE REFERENDUM?

A: WE RECOGNIZE THE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS, FINDINGS ARE CONSISTANT WITH THE RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COUNCIL.

THE RESULTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

Q: WHAT ABOUT CONTINUED OPPOSITION ALLEGATIONS OF FRAUD? REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THE RESULTS?

A: WE NOTE THE CONCERNS RAISED BY THE OPPOSITION.

WE URGE THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION TO HEED SECRETARY GENERAL GAVIRIA'S OFFER TO PRESENT ANY EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE FRAUD TO THE OAS.

THROUGHOUT THIS PROCESS, WE HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT INTIMIDATION OF CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE SUMATE (PRON. SU-MA-TAY), THE POLITIZATION OF STATE INSTITUTIONS AND THE USE OF THE JUDICIARY FOR POLITICAL MEANS.

WE REMAIN CONCERNED THAT DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROCESS MAY EXACERBATE POLARIZATION IN VENEZUELA.

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WE URGE BOTH THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT AND THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION TO WORK TOWARD REDUCING THESE TENSIONS AND TO ENGAGE IN A CONSTRUCTIVE DEMOCRATIC DIALOGUE.

THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT HAS THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF GUARANTEEING THE RIGHTS OF ALL CITIZENS. THE OPPOSITION HAS THE DUTY TO EXPRESS ITS CONCERNS RESPONSIBLY AND PEACEFULLY.

IF ASKED:

Q: REACTION TO PRESIDENT CHAVEZ, COMMENTS OVER THE WEEKEND THAT HE REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE OPPOSITION?

A: WE BELIEVE SUCH COMMENTS ARE NOT CONDUCTIVE TO NATIONAL PEACE AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT. WE CALL ON ALL PARTIES TO REFRAIN FROM IRRESPONSIBLE RHETORIC AND ACTIONS, WHICH ONLY SERVE TO DEEPEN THE POLARIZATION.

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2. WHA PRESS GUIDANCE, AUGUST 24, 2004:  
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-- CUBA ) COMMISSION FOR ASSISTANCE TO A FREE CUBA:  
WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON AUGUST 24, 2004 --

Q. HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO THE CHARGE THAT OUR CUBA POLICY IS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED?

A: OUR POLICY TOWARD CUBA IS TO ENCOURAGE A RAPID, PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY. TO HELP THE CUBAN PEOPLE ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, THE PRESIDENT CREATED THE COMMISSION FOR ASSISTANCE TO A FREE CUBA WITH A MANDATE TO HELP BRING AN END TO THE DICTATORSHIP, AND TO LAY OUT A PLAN FOR ASSISTANCE TO A FREE CUBA.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDED AN INTEGRATED, STRATEGIC APPROACH TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN CUBA AND LIMIT THE REGIME'S MANIPULATION OF HUMANITARIAN POLICIES TO ACCUMULATE RESOURCES TO FINANCE REPRESSION. THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED.

Q. HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO CHARGES THAT THE POLICY IS TOO HARSH AND HAS ALIENATED CUBAN-AMERICANS?

A: THE CHANGES IN LICENSING RULES ARE DESIGNED TO LIMIT THE FLOW OF U.S. DOLLARS TO THE CASTRO REGIME AND ARE NOT DIRECTED SOLELY AT CUBAN-AMERICANS.

THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDED CHANGES THAT INCLUDED TIGHTENING

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OF RESTRICTIONS ON EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES IN CUBA, AS WELL AS LIMITING FAMILY TRAVEL. THE COMMISSION ALSO WELCOMED COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS, REVIEWED HUNDREDS OF E-MAILS AND LETTERS, AND MET WITH A DIVERSE GROUP OF EXPERTS, WHOSE OPINIONS SPANNED A RANGE OF VIEWS FROM THE CUBAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY.

Q. WHAT RULES ARE CURRENTLY IN PLACE REGARDING FOOD, MEDICINE AND TOILETRIES TO CUBA?

A: THE COMMISSION DETERMINED THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT EARNED TENS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS ANNUALLY BY CHARGING DELIVERY FEES TO RECIPIENTS OF GIFT PARCELS. RECOGNIZING THAT GIFT PARCELS MEET A FUNDAMENTAL HUMANITARIAN NEED IN CUBA, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDED THAT GIFT PARCELS BE LIMITED TO FOOD, MEDICINES, MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND DEVICES, RADIOS AND BATTERIES. THIS RECOMMENDATION HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON GIFT PARCELS, I SUGGEST THAT YOU CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

Q. IS THERE A REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION UNDERWAY?

A: THE NEW TREASURY DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS WERE OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT THROUGH AUGUST 15. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT RECEIVED MANY COMMENTS AND WILL BE REVIEWING THEM IN THE COMING MONTHS.

WE CONTINUE TO REVIEW OUR POLICIES TO ENSURE THAT WE FULFILL THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE COMMISSION'S REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT.

-- CUBA: AIRBORNE BROADCASTS OF RADIO AND TV MARTI TO CUBA --  
(REVISED)

Q: COULD YOU GIVE US SOME BACKGROUND ON THE RECENT AIRBORNE BROADCASTS TO CUBA?

A: THE COMMISSION FOR ASSISTANCE TO A FREE CUBA RECOMMENDED TO THE PRESIDENT THAT AIRBORNE TRANSMISSIONS OF RADIO AND TV MARTI BROADCASTING BE CARRIED OUT ON A REGULAR BASIS TO BREAK THE CUBAN REGIME'S INFORMATION BLOCKADE ON THE CUBAN PEOPLE.

THAT TASK, PART OF AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ASSIST THE CUBAN PEOPLE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT RAPID AND PEACEFUL CHANGE TO CUBA, WAS BEGUN ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 21. FOR SEVERAL HOURS, A PENNSYLVANIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD AIRCRAFT OPERATING WITHIN U.S. AIRSPACE BROADCAST A RADIO AND TV MARTI SIGNAL CAPABLE OF BEING RECEIVED IN CUBA.

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BUILDING ON THE EFFORTS OF CUBAN CIVIL SOCIETY, THESE TYPES OF BROADCASTS WILL INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY TO THE CUBAN PEOPLE OF RELIABLE INFORMATION ON EVENTS IN CUBA AND AROUND THE WORLD.

Q: DID THE BROADCAST INTERFERE WITH PRIVATE U.S. BROADCASTING?

A: THE AIRBORNE BROADCAST OF TV MARTI WAS UNDERTAKEN ON A FREQUENCY ALREADY AUTHORIZED BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FOR TV MARTI BROADCASTS.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT RADIO MARTI WAS BROADCAST ON A FREQUENCY NOT USED BY U.S. COMMERCIAL BROADCASTERS.

THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION IS TAKING STEPS TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL TV MARTI INTERFERENCE WITH DOMESTIC STATIONS BY EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE BROADCASTS ON DOMESTIC LICENSEES.

Q: IS THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE HOSTILE ACTION AGAINST U.S. PERSONNEL IN RESPONSE TO THE BROADCASTS? WHAT WOULD THE RESPONSE TO SUCH AN ACT BE?

A: FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR PEOPLE AND OPERATIONAL SECURITY, WE DO NOT DISCUSS OPERATIONAL MATTERS IN DETAIL. HOWEVER, PRECAUTIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO MINIMIZE THE THREATS TO U.S. PERSONNEL FROM CUBAN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT INTERCEPTS OR OTHER DIRECT THREATS AGAINST THE AIRCRAFT.

THESE BROADCASTS WERE MADE ONLY IN U.S. AIRSPACE. ANY ATTEMPT TO INTERCEPT THE AIRCRAFT WOULD BE TREATED AS A HOSTILE ACT AND APPROPRIATE SELF-DEFENSE MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN.

Q: CASTRO HAS LONG CLAIMED THAT THE U.S. INTENDS TO TAKE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST CUBA. IS THIS THE FIRST STEP IN THAT PROCESS?

A: THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES IS TO HASTEN A PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN CUBA. THAT POLICY HAS BEEN ARTICULATED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF OUR GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING BY SECRETARY POWELL.

TV MARTI HAS TRANSMITTED ITS SIGNAL TO CUBA FOR OVER A DECADE, AND ITS SIGNAL IS ROUTINELY JAMMED BY THE REGIME. OUR HOPE IS THAT THESE BROADCASTS WILL ENABLE THE CUBAN PEOPLE TO HAVE ACCESS TO UNCENSORED INFORMATION ABOUT CUBA AND THE WORLD.

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Q: HAVE YOU RECEIVED ANY PROTESTS FROM THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THESE BROADCASTS?

A: THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT HAS COMPLAINED ABOUT RADIO AND TV MARTI BROADCASTS SINCE THEIR INCEPTION. WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE REGIME WILL CONTINUE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT OUR EFFORTS TO PROVIDE DETAILED AND ACCURATE INFORMATION TO THE CUBAN PEOPLE ABOUT EVENTS OUTSIDE OF CUBA.

IT IS OUR POSITION THAT THE MORE CUBANS KNOW ABOUT THE WORLD -- AND THE WORLD KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT CUBA -- THE BETTER THE CHANCES OF A RAPID AND PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL GOAL OF THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES IN EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA.

ONLY IF ASKED:

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POWELL

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